



PO Box 7186 Missoula, MT 59807 (406) 543-0054

22 May 2012

Mark Lere
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Future Fisheries Improvement Funding: Swamp Creek Siphon

Mark,

Montana Trout Unlimited strongly supports the effort to construct a siphon for modifying irrigation diversion affecting Swamp Creek in the Big Hole Valley. Because the project could significantly improve survival for the Big Hole's troubled population of fluvial arctic grayling, we endorse Future Fishery Improvement Funding being used for this venture.

Montana TU and its local chapters have a 25-year history of working with locals and agencies on behalf of grayling conservation in the Big Hole. This project fits squarely within the array of activities we feel are necessary to improve spawning and survival of this fish. The available data indicate Swamp Creek can produce significant numbers of grayling for the Big Hole system. The irrigation canal that intersects the stream, however, is a bottleneck because it is entraining fish and reducing recruitment.

As you are aware from our experiences in the Bitterroot and elsewhere, properly designed siphon systems can reduce or eliminate entrainment and increase recruitment in local native fish populations. We expect the results of constructing a siphon at Swamp Creek to be very beneficial to the Big Hole's population of grayling. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Farling".

Bruce Farling
Executive Director